There were so many of them that I sometimes, when I rose in the early morning, found the space between my headquarter tents filled with a dense crowd. They were a sorry lot; ragged, dirty, and emaciated. The first thing a great many of them asked for as soon as they had surrendered themselves, was " the oath." They insisted upon " taking the oath " without delay. There had, no douht, been much current talk about their having to " take the oath of allegiance " if they surrendered. But many of them seemed to think that " taking the oath " meant getting something to eat,—so eager were they in their demand for it, and apparently as disappointed when they were only asked to hold up their hands and swear. That disappointment was relieved by the subsequent distribution of rations among them, and the avidity and relish with which those rations were devoured, spoke volumes of the lean days when they had had nothing to live upon but roasted ears of corn. Among those with whom I talked I found some who were not without a certain kind of rustic mother-wit. But the ignorance of most of them was beyond belief. There we saw the " Southern poor white " in his typical complexion. His knowledge of the world had originally been confined to the interior and the immediate surroundings of his wretched log-cabin. With those whom we met as deserters, the horizon had been widened somewhat by their experience of campaign life, but not very much. They

had but a very dim conception, if any conception at all, of what all this fighting and bloodshed was about. They had been induced, or had been forced, to join the army by those whom they had been accustomed to look upon as their superiors. They had only an indistinct feeling that on the part of the South the war had not been undertaken and was not carried on for their benefit. There was a " winged word" current among the poor people of the South, which strikingly portrayed the situation,